

CHAPTER 87  
MUSSEL REGULATIONS

[Prior to 12/31/86, Conservation Commission[290] Ch 12]

**571—87.1(481A) Commercial regulations.** The taking and possession of mussels for commercial purposes, from the public waters of the state, shall be subject to the following regulations.

**87.1(1) Seasons.** There shall be an open season for taking mussels each year from April 1 to August 31. The taking of mussels is restricted to the hours between sunrise and sunset.

**\*87.1(2) Size limits.** Except as otherwise provided, a commercial mussel fisher, commercial mussel buyer or commercial mussel helper shall not take or possess a species of mussel open to commercial harvest which is less than the minimum size limit. The minimum size limit on three-ridge mussels shall be 3 inches and on mapleleaf mussels it shall be 2  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches. The minimum size limit on all other mussel species open to commercial harvest shall be 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches. The measurement for minimum size shall be from the center of the hinge side and at a right angle across the shell to the outer edge. All mussels under the minimum size limit that are taken by crowfoot bar or hand shall be returned immediately to the water unharmed over the bed from which they were removed.

**\*87.1(3) Species regulations.** The following species of mussels may be taken by licensed commercial mussel fishers: three-ridge, mapleleaf, pimpleback, pigtoe, hickory nut, and pink heelsplitter. There shall be a continuous closed season on all other species.

**87.1(4) Areas.** Mussel harvest for commercial purposes shall be limited to the Mississippi River and connected backwaters common with the state of Illinois.

**87.1(5) Methods.** Mussels may be taken by hand, diving, and crowfoot bar not to exceed 20 feet in length.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 481A.38, 481A.39, 482.1, 482.3 and 482.12.

**571—87.2(80GA,ch38) Sport regulations.** The taking and possession of mussels for sport purposes from public waters of the state shall be subject to the following regulations.

**87.2(1) Seasons.** There shall be an open season for taking mussels throughout the year. The taking of mussels is restricted to the hours between sunrise and sunset.

**87.2(2) Methods.** Licensed anglers and children younger than 16 years of age may take mussels by hand or pole and line.

**87.2(3) Species.** Species other than those listed as threatened or endangered may be lawfully taken and possessed. Zebra mussels shall not be taken and possessed.

\* At its meeting held May 12, 1998, the Administrative Rules Review Committee delayed the effective date of May 13, 1998, until the adjournment of the 1999 Session of the General Assembly.

**87.2(4) *Limits.*** Live mussels may be harvested only from the Mississippi River and connected backwaters. Dead mussels only may be harvested from the remaining waters of the state. The possession limit is 24 whole mussels or 48 shell halves. The sale of mussels or shells is not permitted with a sport fishing license.

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